

VZCZCXYZ0000
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHMN #1071 3651430
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 311430Z DEC 07
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7861
INFO RUCNMR/MERCOSUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS MONTEVIDEO 001071

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/BSC

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [UY](#)
SUBJECT: GOU SHUTTERED

REF: MONTEVIDEO 1061

¶11. (U) The Presidency and the cabinet will be closed for business during the entire month of January except for a government-wide strategic planning meeting on January 14. President Vazquez has called for key Frente Amplio (FA) officials to gather that day to discuss issues related to state reform, such as impending transformations in public administration and the GOU's recently announced decentralization project. The latter purports to create mayoralties in at least 100 cities in the interior. The GOU will also define other structural changes planned for 2008 which would require constitutional reform. These include expanding the right to vote to Uruguayans outside the country. Vazquez' FA powwow will include the vice-president, cabinet members, the office of budgets and planning, the office of civil services, directors of the large public companies, and all FA legislators.

¶12. (SBU) COMMENT: In addition to the publicly announced meeting agenda on January 14, we expect more hints about cabinet changes expected in February to emerge. The question of who will lead the FA ticket in 2009 will also loom large in the background. A recent barrage of corruption allegations against FA leaders and the parties' recent inability to select new leadership (reftel) is glaring in the eyes of the public. Vazquez will want to start the new year off with momentum and shake off criticism of the FA, which has been suffering in recent polls (reftel).
Harding